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Sixty-first year

The situation in the Middle East

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Identical letters dated 26 June 2006 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I am writing to draw your attention to a violent attack perpetrated by Palestinian terrorist organizations against Israel.

Yesterday, at approximately 5.30 a.m., members of the Hamas terrorist organization, along with partner terrorist organizations, infiltrated Israel near the Kerem Shalom border crossing with the Gaza Strip, via a deep tunnel dug 300 metres into Israeli territory. In the attack, the terrorists killed two Israeli soldiers. First, Lieutenant Hanan Barak, 20, of Arad and Staff Sergeant Pavel Slutzker, 20, of Dimona; kidnapped one soldier, Corporal Gilad Shalit, 19, of Mitzpeh Hila; and wounded three other soldiers. Hamas, the Popular Resistance Committees, and Jish al-Islam ("the Army of Islam") took responsibility for the attack.

This assault represents an extremely serious incident, as Hamas and its partners perpetrated an attack on Israeli soil, in a blunt violation of Israeli jurisdiction and in contradiction of the United Nations Charter, United Nations and international conventions and international humanitarian law. Israel views the Hamas-led Palestinian Government as specifically responsible for this attack, and the Palestinian Authority Chairman Mahmoud Abbas responsible for the welfare of Corporal Gilad Shalit.

Israel has fully disengaged from the Gaza Strip, with the hope of opening a window of opportunity to peace. Nevertheless, Gaza has increasingly turned into a terror base, actively supported by the Hamas Government. This terrorist attach emphasizes once again that the takeover of the Palestinian Authority by a terrorist organization is not an internal political matter. It is an event of major significance that affects the stability of the entire region. Moreover, this attack was supported by Khaled Mashal, a Hamas leader who is currently operating from Damascus with the support of the Syrian regime.

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This belligerent attack also underscores that the discord between the Hamas-led Palestinian Authority and Israel is not about boundaries or settlements, but rather about the very right of Israel to live in peace and security. Despite claiming to pursue a ceasefire, Hamas was busy for months digging the deep tunnel used during the attack. For Hamas, this is not a territorial or political conflict. It is a religious conflict that can never be resolved via peaceful reconciliation. We call on the international community to maintain a firm stand against the Hamas terrorist organization and deny it any form of legitimacy until it fully meets the three conditions set out by the international community: to recognize Israel, renounce violence and terror and abide by prior international agreements.

Our main concern should focus now on the well-being and safe release of Corporal Gilad Shalit. We expect the international community to voice strong condemnation of this violent attack and call for Corporal Shalit's immediate return.

Please find annexed a communiqué from a cabinet meeting of the Government of the State of Israel, issued yesterday following the attack.

I submit the present letter in follow-up to numerous letters detailing the campaign of Palestinian terrorism launched in September 2000, which document the crimes for which the terrorists and their supporters must be held fully accountable.

I would be grateful if you would arrange to have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly, under agenda items 108 and 14, of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Daniel **Carmon**
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

Annex to the identical letters dated 26 June 2006 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Political-Security Cabinet Convenes

25 June 2006

The Political-Security Cabinet convened this afternoon and made the following decisions:

1. Israel views the terrorist incident that occurred today with utmost severity. The Palestinian Authority (PA) — the PA Chairman and the PA government — is responsible for the event with all this implies.

2. Israel will take all necessary actions in order to bring about the release of abducted soldier Cpl. Gilad Shalit.

This objective has top priority and, to this end, the Cabinet approves all the preparations that were presented to it by the security establishment.

3. The PA will bear full responsibility for any harm to Cpl. Shalit. No person or organization will have immunity at this time.

4. The Cabinet approves the security establishment's recommendations to prepare and deploy the necessary forces in order to be ready for urgent military action as obligated by the PA's actions and intentions.

5. Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Defense Minister Amir Peretz will decide to approve actions against targets among the terrorist organizations and the PA according to the recommendations of the security establishment.

6. Contacts will continue with the international community in order to maintain the international pressure on the PA leadership with the objective of bringing about Cpl. Shalit's release.

7. Prime Minister Olmert's Media Adviser Asaf Shariv will coordinate the media and the information campaign regarding both Cpl. Shalit's abduction and actions designed to bring about his release (the Prime Minister's Office, the Foreign Ministry, the Defense Ministry, the IDF and the security services).